

I claim:

1. An apparatus for packaging a media disc into a case, the case having a housing to which a lid is coupled for movement between an open and a closed position, the apparatus comprising:

a conveyor moveable to convey the case along a feed path;

an inclined surface positioned to contact the case on the conveyor by relative movement between the conveyor and the inclined surface;

an arm positioned along the feed path for inserting the media disc into the case in the open position of the case; and

a roll rotatably supported to contact the case along the feed path, the roll pressing the case towards the closed position.

2. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the inclined surface is a surface of a wedge.

3. The apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein the wedge has a tip positioned to contact the case on the conveyor for separating the lid from the housing.

4. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the conveyor comprises a rotary table.

5. The apparatus as claimed in claim 4, wherein the rotary table further comprises an index ring coupled to the table to incrementally move the cases along the feed path.

6. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a user-manipulatable actuator coupled to the conveyor for hand-operation of the conveyor.

7. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the inclined surface is a surface of a wedge positioned to open the case via relative movement of the wedge and case.

8. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a case receptacle positioned adjacent to the feed path and adapted to hold a plurality of cases.

9. The apparatus as claimed in claim 8, wherein the conveyor is positioned to receive a case from the case receptacle.

10. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the conveyor is a first conveyor, the apparatus further comprising a second conveyor adjacent to the inclined surface and positioned to transport cases to the first conveyor.

11. The apparatus as claimed in claim 10, further a case receptacle positioned adjacent to the feed path and adapted to hold a plurality of cases.

12. The apparatus as claimed in claim 11, wherein the second conveyor is positioned to receive cases from the case receptacle.

13. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising at least one rail positioned along the feed path to hold the lid of the case in an open position until the media disc is placed in the case.

14. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising at least one guide rail positioned along the feed path to at least assist in moving the lid of the case toward a closed position.

15. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a media disc receptacle positioned along the feed path adjacent to the arm.

16. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a region along the feed path in which loaded cases are removed from the conveyor after closure of the loaded cases.

17. The apparatus as claimed in claim 16, wherein the conveyor has an aperture through which loaded cases are removed from the conveyor.

18. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising at least one additional arm along the feed path, the arm being movable to insert at least one additional item into the case.

19. The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising recesses in the conveyor, the recesses adapted to hold the cases.

20. An apparatus for packaging a media disc into a case, the case having a housing to which a lid is coupled for movement between an open and a closed position, the apparatus comprising:

a conveyor moveable to convey the case along a feed path;
an inclined surface positioned to contact and open the case on the conveyor by relative movement between the conveyor and the inclined surface;
an arm positioned along the feed path for inserting the media disc into the case in the open position of the case; and
a guide rail positioned along the feed path, the guide rail assisting to control the position of the lid relative to the housing.

21. The apparatus as claimed in claim 20, wherein the inclined surface is a surface of a wedge against which the case is forced on the conveyor.

22. The apparatus as claimed in claim 21, wherein the wedge has a tip positioned to contact and separate the lid from the housing by relative movement between the conveyor and the inclined surface.

23. The apparatus as claimed in claim 20, wherein the conveyor comprises a rotary table.

24. The apparatus as claimed in claim 23, wherein the rotary table further comprises an index ring coupled to the table to incrementally move the cases along the feed path.

25. The apparatus as claimed in claim 20, further comprising a user-manipulatable actuator coupled to the conveyor for hand-operation of the conveyor.

26. The apparatus as claimed in claim 20, further comprising a case receptacle positioned adjacent to the feed path and adapted to hold a plurality of cases.

27. The apparatus as claimed in claim 26, wherein the conveyor is positioned to receive cases from the case receptacle.

28. The apparatus as claimed in claim 20, wherein the conveyor is a first conveyor, the apparatus further comprising a second conveyor positioned to transport the case from the inclined surface to the arm.

29. The apparatus as claimed in claim 20, further comprising a case receptacle positioned adjacent the feed path and adapted to hold a plurality of cases.

30. The apparatus as claimed in claim 28, wherein the first conveyor is positioned to remove a case from the case receptacle.

31. The apparatus as claimed in claim 20, further comprising at least one guide rail located along the feed path, the at least one guide rail positioned to hold the lid of the case in an open position until the media disc is placed in the case.

32. The apparatus as claimed in claim 20, wherein the at least one guide rail is positioned along the feed path to at least assist in rotation of the lid of the case toward a closed position.

33. The apparatus as claimed in claim 20, further comprising a media disc receptacle positioned along the feed path adjacent to the arm.

34. The apparatus as claimed in claim 33, wherein the media disc receptacle further comprises a second conveyor positioned to supply the media discs to the arm.

35. The apparatus as claimed in claim 20, further comprising a region along the feed path for removing loaded cases from the conveyor after the loaded cases have been closed.

36. The apparatus as claimed in claim 35, wherein the conveyor has an aperture through which the loaded cases can be removed.

37. The apparatus as claimed in claim 20, further comprising at least one additional arm along the feed path for inserting additional items into the case.

38. The apparatus as claimed in claim 20, further comprising recesses in the conveyor adapted to hold the cases.

39. An apparatus for opening a media disc case, the case having a housing to which a lid is coupled for movement between an open and a closed position, the apparatus comprising:

a conveyor; and

an inclined surface positioned to contact and open the case on the conveyor by relative movement between the conveyor and the inclined surface;

wherein at least one of the conveyor and the inclined surface is moveable relative to the other.

40. The apparatus as claimed in claim 39, wherein the inclined surface is a surface of a wedge.

41. A method of packaging a media disc into a case, the case having a housing to which a lid is coupled for movement between an open and a closed position, comprising:

forcing the case against a wedge;

opening the lid responsive to the case being forced against the wedge;

receiving at least one media disc into the housing portion of the case; and

closing the case by moving the lid portion from its open state to its closed state.

42. The method as claimed in claim 41, further comprising placing additional items within the case prior to closing the case.

43. The method as claimed in claim 41, further comprising retaining the lid of the case in an open position with at least one guide rail to facilitate receiving at least one media disc within the case.

44. The method as claimed in claim 43, further comprising:
freeing the lid portion from the at least one guide rail; and
directing the lid portion toward a closed position with respect to the housing.

45. The method as claimed in claim 41, wherein closing the case comprises moving the case to a closed position on the housing with a roll by exerting a force on the lid towards the housing.

46. The method as claimed in claim 43, wherein closing the case further comprises:
removing the lid from the at least one guide rail;
directing the lid toward a closed position; and
pressing the case to a closed position with a roll by exerting a force on the lid toward the housing.

47. The method as claimed in claim 41, wherein receiving at least one media disc comprises:

grasping a media disc;
transporting the media disc to the housing; and
releasing the media disc in the housing.

48. The method as claimed in claim 47, wherein grasping the media disc comprises grasping the media disc with a vacuum cup.

49. The method as claimed in claim 41, wherein the forcing, receiving, and closing steps occur at different locations in an apparatus.

50. The method as claimed in claim 49, further comprising conveying the case from one location to another.

51. The method as claimed in claim 50, wherein conveying the case comprises rotating a conveyor on a table.

52. The method as claimed in claim 51, further comprising dropping the case through an aperture beneath the rotating conveyor after the case is closed with a media disc inside.

53. The method as claimed in claim 41, further comprising separating the lid from the housing prior to forcing the case against the wedge.

54. The method as claimed in claim 41, further comprising separating the lid from the housing with an element located between the wedge and the case.

55. The method as claimed in claim 41, further comprising separating the lid from the housing by forcing the case against the wedge.

56. A method of opening a media disc case, the case having a housing to which a lid is coupled for movement between an open and a closed position, comprising:

forcing the case against a wedge;

separating the lid from the housing responsive to the case being forced against the wedge;

and

moving the lid to further open the case.

57. A method of opening a media disc case, the case having a housing to which a lid is coupled for movement between an open and a closed position, the method comprising:

forcing a surface of the case against a wedge adjacent to the case;

wedging the surface of the case against the wedge;

opening the lid a distance away from the housing by wedging the surface of the case against the wedge.

58. The method as claimed in claim 57, further comprising separating the lid from the housing.

59. The method as claimed in claim 57, further comprising separating the lid from the housing.